

Martin/St. Lucie Service Center
Karen Smith, Director
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Restoration is the theme of two partnerships in the Martin/St. Lucie area. First, the District partnered with Martin County and The Natural Resources Conservation Service to purchase the Allapattah Ranch property. The Martin/St. Lucie Service Center is



working with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission, and Department of Environmental Protection, as well as several local community groups, to put together and implement a restoration and management plan that will have functions ranging from water storage to

recreation for both the estuaries and the citizens of Martin County. The Allapattah Project is a component of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan’s Indian River Lagoon South Restoration Project.

Also tied to the Indian River Lagoon is the second partnership – the Indian River Lagoon license tag program. The Florida Legislature established the Indian River Lagoon license plate to fund lagoon habitat restoration, water quality improvement, and environmental education projects. The District is responsible for administering a portion of the funds in St. Lucie, Martin and Palm Beach counties. The remaining funds are distributed by the St. Johns River Water Management District. At present, only governmental and not-for profit organization can apply for the license plate funds with at least 80 percent of the proceeds benefiting habitat restoration and up to 20 percent benefiting environmental education focusing on the lagoon.

Orlando Service Center
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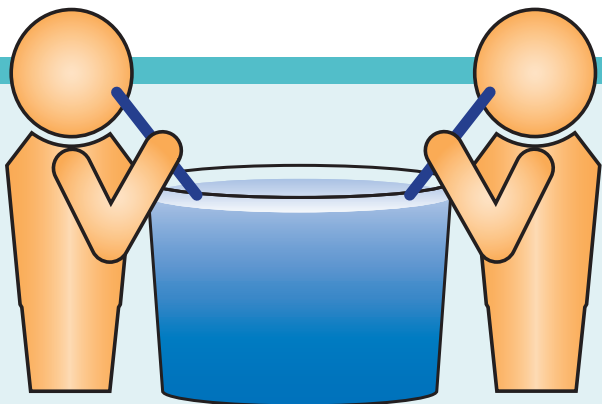
Working with both the cities and counties in Central Florida, the District has improved water storage, water quality and flood protection. Through alternative water supply grants and interagency agreements, the District assisted the City of St. Cloud with substantially increasing its facilities for the storage and delivery of reclaimed water for irrigation in this rapidly growing community. Additionally, the District secured a \$2 million state appropriation on behalf of the City of Kissimmee and, through and Interagency Agreement with the City, is assisting the City with identifying and implementing a variety of projects designed to improve the level of flood control and the quality of storm water flowing into Lake Tohopekaliga from older sections of the city.

Also in Orlando in a garden overflowing with messages of water



conservation and “the right plant in the right place,” the District – in partnership with RainBird sprinkler manufacturing corporation – greeted guests to the 11th Annual International Flower and Garden Festival, which was held recently at Walt Disney World’s Epcot.

For more information about projects, useful maps and happenings at your nearest Service Center, please visit our Web site at www.sfwmd.gov and click on “About SFWMD.”



Grants Turn Gulps into Sips

WaterSIP Program funds local water conservation projects

Water conservation initiatives help stretch our water resources and in doing so, benefit the environment. In our growing state, saving water should be a way of life. And in South Florida where the population is expected to reach over 7 million in the next decade, every drop counts.

Successful water conservation takes the cooperation of many parties – water management districts, local governments, utilities, homeowners’ associations – everyone. Since 2002, the South Florida Water Management District helped fund water conservation projects through the Water Savings Incentive Program.

“Nicknamed WaterSIP, the program helps public and private entities with technology-based conservation projects that help reduce water use,” said Jane Bucca who supervises the District’s water conservation program. The District cost-shares one-year contracts for projects such as rain sensor installations, irrigation system retrofits, and low-flow showerhead exchanges. “Grants awarded in 2003 totaled \$250,000,” Bucca said.

Once installed this year, the 2003 projects will result in water savings of 171 million gallons per year. Projects included a \$30,000 grant to the City of Coconut Creek for installing automatic flushing devices on water hydrants. Normal practice for fire hydrant flushing is a scheduled, infrequent large-quantity flush to bring disinfection standards in line. With automatic flushing devices, a small amount of water is meted out periodically. Not only do the devices help maintain good water quality at end points in the city’s water distribution system, but they save significant quantities of water, in the case of Coconut Creek, 15 million gallons annually.

“These low-consumption automatic flushing devices will help us conserve a sizable volume of potable water each year,” Raj Verma said, the director of Utilities and Engineering for Coconut Creek. He added that the savings will decrease demand on their overall system.

District Governing Board Member Irela Bagué strongly supports the WaterSIP program. “Grant programs such as these are important tools to spread the water conservation message throughout our region. We hope local communities with innovative water savings ideas will take advantage of these programs to conserve our precious resources,” Bagué said.

Each year in January, the WaterSIP Program begins with a solicitation for grant applications. Projects are then selected, ranked, and finally approved by the District’s Governing Board. Once our project partners get the green light through funding, they’re off and running to begin initiatives that will save millions of gallons of water each year. This year, WaterSIP grants totaling approximately \$250,000 were approved in April. Partners and projects for the 2004 grants include the Hunter’s Creek Community Association, irrigation system retrofit; City of North Miami Beach, ultra-low flush toilet retrofit; Quail Ridge Property Owners Association, irrigation system retrofit; Orange County Utilities, purchase of rain sensors; Port LaBelle Utilities, irrigation system retrofit; City of Boynton Beach, park irrigation systems; and Port LaBelle Unit 4 Property Owners Association, irrigation system retrofit.

Find Freddy! Where in the District is Freddy?

HERE’S YOUR CHANCE TO TEST YOUR SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT KNOWLEDGE BY GUESSING WHERE OUR MASCOT, FREDDY THE FRIENDLY ALLIGATOR, IS PHOTOGRAPHED SOMEWHERE THROUGHOUT OUR 16-COUNTY REGION. IS HE ENJOYING AN EARLY MORNING AIRBOAT RIDE IN THE EVERGLADES? LOOKING FOR LOVE – OR LUNCH – IN THE INDIAN RIVER LAGOON? COOLING OFF IN THE CORKSCREW SWAMP? STARTING WITH THIS ISSUE OF *WATERMATTERS*, WE WILL PROVIDE YOU WITH A FEW CLUES FOR YOU TO GUESS WHERE FREDDY IS FROLICKING – AND IT’S A LOT TOUGHER THAN YOU MIGHT THINK. GOOD LUCK!



CLUES:

- I can hike here for miles and miles in one direction and end up right back where I started.

- Wildlife and nature views here are very “scenic,” including herons, egrets and other birds in the water, snakes and turtles in the marshes, and crested caracaras, burrowing owls and sandhill cranes in the oak and cabbage palm hammocks.

- Fishing here is fabulous!

Give up?

The answer is on the back page.

